

natural world—the song and flight of birds, the yearly progress of trees, sun, and stars, clouds and rain, rivers and mountains—about all of these they must have intelligent and definite knowledge. They must know something, too, of the progress of science, the triumphs of discovery; and each of these subjects should have its own master ready to unfold his tale, to clinch his arguments; not such a teacher as would distract the mind by his own personality, but a silent guide who offers you his book, his book on perhaps the subject which has been the main interest of his life. Small wonder that the children who learn at first-hand from a dozen or more first-rate books read consecutively, and not by way of selections and extracts, should progress by leaps and bounds.

We find these council-school children—those “incredible children,” as some one calls them—exceedingly open to the joy of great pictures. They have half-a-dozen beautiful reproductions of pictures by one master each term. Last term Van Eyck was the master set, and this reaches me about a London County Council School: “Van Eyck is their joy. They do know a lot about him. One child went to the library and took out a volume on him. Another child who was envious could not take what was gone, so she got a guide to Belgium and now knows all about St. Bavon’s anyway!” A Gloucestershire headmaster, “who on some points still has doubts,” writes: “Picture Study is most acceptable. It is rare to see a picture without a child studying it during playtimes and before and after school. We find that children do notice detail; they do exercise their powers of imagination; and they do attempt sound, logical reasoning.” Music we treat much in the same way—that is to say, a few works by a single composer are played again and again to the children during a term, with a few appropriate remarks, until they become a little familiar with the style of that composer and have some slight intimacy with some of his works. But I need not go further into the details of the scheme. All the parts are welded together so as to make a homogeneous whole. Children in secondary schools and families have a considerably wider range of study, including languages and mathematics, than those in primary schools, but exactly the same work is set for the latter, if not so much of it.

I am very grateful to the Editor of the *School Guardian* for allowing me to unfold to the readers of that paper a scheme which is particularly adapted to Church of England schools, many of which in various counties are already working with great success. No expense whatever attends the adoption or working of the scheme excepting, and that is a great exception, the cost of the necessary books. Perhaps 25l. should cover the initial cost in a girls’ or boys’ school of one hundred and fifty. The books last for years and many of them are permanent. Some few tales, plays, and the like change term by term; but pains are taken to keep the cost as low as possible. In most parishes there are no doubt a few people who would afford this sum for the sake of the enormous gains in character and conduct that would certainly result among the young people of the parish. Here and there concerts and sales of work have been held to obtain the necessary funds. Of course, the desirable thing is that the children should buy the books for themselves, and we find that parents lend themselves readily to this outlay. Where all the children are poor no doubt the school would have to find the books; where some are poorer than the rest the school might well supplement deficiencies. But if the children buy only one of the Waverley novels or a play of Shakespeare in a term, why, as the Director of Education of a big city says, “in this way home libraries are formed.”

An eminent speaker at a British Association meeting four or five years ago complained that our education was deadly uninteresting alike to children, parents, and

NATIONAL SOCIETY

For Promoting the Education of the Poor in the Principles of the Church of England.

Temporary Address—

12 PRINCES STREET, MANOVER SQUARE, W. 1.

The 108th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

TO BE HELD AT THE

CHURCH HOUSE (Hoare Memorial Hall),
Great Smith Street, Westminster, S.W. 1.

Thursday, June 5th, 1919, at half-past two o’clock.

The Chair will be taken by the

ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY, President of the Society.

Other speakers will be

The Right Rev. the Lord Bishop of London,
The Rt. Hon. Lord Hugh Cecil, M.P.,
Sir Montague Barlow, K.B.E., M.P.

R. HOLLAND, Secretary.

teachers. Here is a scheme of extraordinary interest for all three, and one which might very well restore the Church to its ancient position as the leader of educational thought and work.

CHARLOTTE M. MASON.

N.B.—All teachers agree, I think, that the scheme described above effects a surprising improvement in the vocabulary, spelling, and composition of their classes. We have heard too of improvement in arithmetic, though we do not examine council schools in this subject; but no doubt the habits of close attention and quick comprehension tell in every subject studied, and will tell in the future in whatever occupation the young scholars may undertake.

POSSIBILITIES IN THE SUPERVISION OF RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION IN CHURCH DAY SCHOOLS

PERHAPS the words “in country districts” should be added to this title, for my experience lies in a diocese which is mainly rural. I must also limit myself to “possibilities” which arise in connection with the inspector’s annual visit to schools. Other methods of “supervision” include the provision of classes, demonstration lessons, &c., for teachers, of which, I am convinced, much more use must everywhere be made. But these cannot adequately be considered in this short paper.

1. May I say at the outset that I assume that the inspector will make it his first business to establish friendly relations with the teachers. The first year in which he goes his rounds to schools will be well spent if this be accomplished. “Possibilities” indeed do not begin until this is done. The teachers must be made to feel that the inspector comes, not as a mere official, certainly not as an inquisitor, but as a sympathetic and understanding adviser, who knows the great difficulties of the task in which they are engaged (and for which, through no fault of their own in many cases, they are but poorly equipped), and who is anxious and willing to give at all times any assistance which is within his power. When the good-will of the teachers has been secured, suggestions made in the right spirit will be only too thankfully accepted in the same spirit. The inspector knows that he is not armed with the powers of H.M.I. Nor does he wish that he possessed them. For he is concerned with the religious work of the teachers, and nothing would be gained if he were able to compel compliance with his wishes.

2. At the same time the teachers have a right to expect that the inspector knows his business, that he is not merely a genial, good-natured gentleman, who will praise